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Dear Sir:*Letter to the Editor*

Since Mr. Paul W. Blackstock has written what purports to be a discussion of a forgery mill in Paris and more particularly of the "Litvinov Diary" it might be useful to your readers and perhaps to Mr. Blackstock to correct and clarify a few matters.

The actual story of the "Litvinov Diary" is as follows: It was offered for sale to André Deutsch, a publisher in Great Britain, who engaged the services of Professor Edward H. Carr to investigate the authenticity of the "Diary." Professor Carr went to the Continent, visited the man who had made the manuscript available, and learned of a Mr. X and a Mr. Y who were not open to interview.

Professor Carr reported favorably and agreed to do an introduction and footnotes, whereupon André Deutsch, considering this an international event of prime importance, offered Harper's an opportunity for simultaneous publication in America. Harper's called on my services. In a confidential report, made available to Professor Carr and André Deutsch by Harper's, I demonstrated that it was a forgery and indicated how it was concocted. Harper's decided not to publish but André Deutsch did publish and Professor Carr, only slightly modifying his introduction, continued to give the weight of his reputation to the work.

Only when Walter Bedell Smith also vouched for its authenticity and wrote an introduction for an edition to be published by Norton, did I, with Harper's permission, make public my confidential report.

I published it in various places at various times: namely, in the *New Leader*, where I wrote three articles called "Adventures in Forged Sovietica," the "Litvinov Diary" being only one of the three; in *Commentary* magazine, where I called it "The Strange Case of the Litvinov Diary"; in *Encounter* in England and at the same time, or somewhat earlier, I made the information available to Boris Souvarine in France.

Apparently these sources have not been used by Mr. Blackstock, for he writes: "As Bertram Wolfe said some years later of the spurious Litvinov journal: 'These spicy, disjointed, bemusing bedtime story concoctions tend to drive out of circulation the more serious studies of the secretive and real nature of the Soviet system.'" Actually the sentence he quotes as mine I did not write but quoted it from a *New York Times* review of the Norton edition.

The reader may find the whole story in convenient form in my *Strange Communists I Have Known*, New York and London, 1965 and 1966, Chapter 10, "The Strange Case of the Litvinov Diary."

BERTRAM D. WOLFE

The Hoover Institution
Stanford, California
October 4, 1966

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